



STATE OF WASHINGTON
WASHINGTON STATE BOARD OF HEALTH

PO Box 47990 • Olympia, Washington 98504-7990

January 29, 2007

The Honorable Jeanne Kohl-Welles
Labor, Commerce, Research & Development Committee Chair
Washington State Senate
Post Office Box 40436
Olympia, Washington 98504-0436

Dear Senator Kohl-Welles:

I am writing as chair of the Washington State Board of Health to express concerns about Senate Bill 5484, which is scheduled to be heard before your committee on January 30. This bill would allow owners of food establishments with liquor licenses to admit "well-behaved" dogs on leashes. The bill would apply to restaurants with liquor licenses, as well as taverns. The bill would be in conflict with a public health rule adopted by the Board as chapter 246-215 WAC.

The SBOH rules, which are adopted from the US Food and Drug Administration's (FDA) Food Code, implement nationally recognized standards prohibiting pets in food establishments. These standards have been adopted by all states, with only a few partial exceptions. Dogs may carry pathogens transmissible to humans through food and food contact surfaces, including *Salmonella*, *Campylobacter*, *Giardia*, and *Staphylococcus*. Dogs tend to drool, lick, and relieve themselves at inappropriate times. Even when well-behaved, their fur might be contaminated with minute particles of fecal matter and the pathogens mentioned. They tend to continuously shed fur. This could contaminate surfaces of a restaurant or the hands of people.

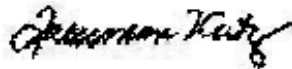
The national standards allow service animals assisting disabled persons and patrol dogs accompanying security officers to enter non-food preparation areas of food establishments, but not pets. These animals are expected to be well-trained by the nature of their service. Pet dogs are less likely to have this training to be calm and well-behaved in public.

Besides the food safety concerns mentioned above, a significant percentage of the population is allergic to dogs. Dogs and their residual dander can cause an allergic reaction such as an asthmatic attack.

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Thank you for considering these potential public health implications of SB 5484.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Treuman Katz", with a stylized, cursive script.

Treuman Katz
Chair, Washington State Board of Health

cc: Senate Labor, Commerce, Research & Development Committee Members
Senator Ken Jacobsen
Washington State Board of Health Members
Ms. Christina Hulet, Governor's Executive Policy Office
Mr. Brian Peyton, Department of Health
Mr. Craig McLaughlin, Washington State Board of Health